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# THE AURORAN

Aurora's Community Newspaper

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FREE

Week of August 11, 2022



Michael Braithwaite, Executive Director of Blue Door Shelters, is pictured at Town Park where the organization will celebrate 40 years of community service later this month. Auroran photo by Brock Weir

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## Thousands of lives touched by Blue Door Shelters over last 40 years

Milestone to be celebrated at Town Park this month

**BY BROCK WEIR**  
EDITOR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

It started as a grassroots initiative to help the most vulnerable people in the community, and 40 years on, Blue Door Shelters has stayed close

to its roots in the face of exceptional demand.

Now York Region's largest emergency housing providers, they have forged deep roots in the community.

As Blue Door Shelters marks its milestone anniversary, they are facing unprecedented demand due to the dual affordability and housing crises, but they remain undaunted in their efforts to raise awareness and

advocate for solutions they believe will truly address what is sometimes an invisible problem.

Ahead of Doors Unlocked: A 40 Year Perspective, a community gathering to mark their milestone which is set to take place at Aurora Town Park on Saturday, August 27, at 4 p.m., Executive Director Michael Braithwaite is looking back on the thousands of lives impacted

Continued on page 6

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Tom Mrakas filed his nomination papers on Tuesday morning to seek a second term as Aurora's mayor. Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

### Mrakas to seek second term as Mayor

**BY BROCK WEIR**  
EDITOR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The race is now on to be Aurora's next mayor.

Incumbent Tom Mrakas formally filed his nomination papers at Town Hall on Tuesday morning, making the run to Aurora's top job, at press time, a two-way race with local business owner Phiona Durrant.

In a statement, Mrakas said now that

Continued on page 14

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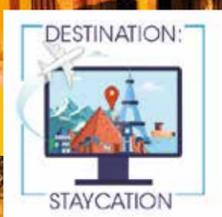
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### Destination: Staycation

We depart on our virtual adventure to tour Chiang Mai with a local Buddhist monk as our guide on August 30th! With a live-walking tour where we can hear and see all of the action in real-time, this year's destination will be one you won't want to miss! Join us on our travels and receive a themed gift with your registration!



Check it out at [www.myhospice.ca/destination-staycation/](http://www.myhospice.ca/destination-staycation/)

PHOTO COURTESY WIKIPEDIA



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# Ribfest headliners to be announced this week

BY BROCK WEIR  
EDITOR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Aurora's tastiest summer event is set to return to this month, and one tantalizing morsel will be announced this week.

As The Auroran went to press, the Town was preparing to announce at Concerts in the Park the bands who will serve as headliners of the 2022 Ribfest, which will take place from Friday, August 26 through Sunday, August 28 at Machell Park.

"Mark your calendars because the tastiest event of the year will be taking place at Machell Park, as the rib teams get fired up," says the Town. "Not only will there be the tastiest ribs but also roasted yams, roasted corn on the cob, beavertails, and many other dishes for every appetite."

It's a "myth" that Ribfest is all about the meat, says Shelley Ware, Special Events Coordinator for the Town of Aurora. In fact, the sizzling meat accounts for less than 50 per cent of what is being offered on-site.

"It's a hometown party," says Ms. Ware. "From its inception it became a summer tradition. People are able to invite family and friends up to their community to experience something like this. We're really very happy to be working with the Rotary Club and they're fantastic to work with. Things just really lined up nicely with this."

This 16<sup>th</sup> year will be yet another return to some degree of normalcy since the start of the global pandemic. This will be the second Ribfest to take place since 2019 and since its return last year many public health restrictions have been lifted.

"We're bringing back the inflatable midway which we didn't have last year," says Ms. Ware. "The food vendors are ecstatic to come back and hopefully there will be a very good lineup of music."

Teasing this week's music announcement, she says one band hails from British Columbia and the other Ontario.

"They have been around for decades and both have been on the top of the charts for Canadian music. One of the bands we have been working for several years getting and almost had them in 2020, but of course we didn't have the event that year. The other band is still within classic rock, but on a different edge of the spectrum – a little bit more edgy. We're starting off with a strong, edgy feel and we're landing Saturday night with a true classic."

"Mark your calendars; the event season is a very busy one this year, but don't be shy to have a staycation and stay in Aurora because we do have exciting experiences for you to enjoy and take advantage of."

Ribfest will open at Machell Park Friday, August 26 from 4 – 11 p.m., on



Auroran file photo by Glenn Rodger

Saturday, August 27, from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m., and on Sunday, August 28, from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.

A beer garden will run from 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. on the Friday; 12 noon to 11 p.m. on the Saturday; and 12 noon to 8 p.m. on the Sunday.

The Children's Activity Zone will be a destination for kids and families on Saturday from 2 – 5 p.m., and on the Sunday from 2 – 5 p.m.

Participating rib and food vendors include Billy Bones from Fort Erie, ON, Camp 31 from Brewton, Alabama, Sticky Fingers from Castleberry, Alabama, and Uncle Sam's BBQ from Albuquerque, New Mexico. Also participating are Beavertails, Billy Bob's Fries, Churriscos, Mister Softee Ice Cream, Mr. Kettle Corn, and Ontario Corn Roasters.

For more information, visit [aurora.ca/ribfest](http://aurora.ca/ribfest).

## Powell Group invests \$1 million in Stronach Regional Cancer Centre

The Powell Group of Companies has donated \$1 million to help create the cancer care our communities deserve at Southlake Regional Health Centre.

This investment from Powell Group of Companies is the first corporate leadership gift to Southlake's HERE Is Where Cancer Meets Its Match campaign.

This \$20 million Campaign will bring the latest technology to Southlake's Stronach Regional Cancer Centre to ensure talented clinicians can deliver the best care — and the best chance for our patients to survive their cancer — right here.

"We're incredibly grateful to The Powell Group of Companies' tremendous generosity and commitment to local cancer care," said Jennifer Ritter, President and CEO of Southlake Foundation. "This first gift is tremendously important because it inspires others to give and increases the impact of their gift on this Campaign."

Since opening its doors in 2010 the Stronach Regional Cancer Centre has provided leading edge cancer care that our patients need and deserve. The communities we serve are among the fastest growing and fastest aging in Ontario, and the care we provide must keep pace.

Community support like this helps ensure that leading edge technologies, greater options for diagnoses and

treatment, and urgently needed spaces are available close to home for those faced with a cancer diagnosis.

This \$1 million gift will fund The Powell Group of Companies' Radiation Treatment Suite. It will bring the latest technology to Southlake's Radiation Therapy Program and expand capacity to meet the increasing demand for care. The HERE is Where Cancer Meets its Match Campaign will upgrade Southlake's original three Linear Accelerators and add a fifth to allow care for 8,000 more treatments a year.

The Powell Group of Companies has formed a deep connection to Southlake. Their employees and their families live in our communities and rely on the Stronach Regional Cancer Centre for their cancer care. Their investment in this Campaign will increase our capacity to help more people and will improve their quality of life as both patients and caregivers.

"If you have cancer, this is the place to be," says Dr. Peter Anglin, Physician Leader, Stronach Regional Cancer Centre. "We have incredible talent here—individuals at the forefront of their disciplines. Our doctors, nurses and technicians represent the very best. With this generous support from The Powell Group of Companies, we can ensure our clinicians have the technology worthy of their skills."

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**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

**Time to stand up and act**

Jewish Canadians are 10 times more likely than members of any other religious community to be the target of a hate crime.

This startling number came from a Statistics Canada report on police-reported hate crimes, issued this month.

As we have seen in the past, many Canadians will scan this report and dismiss it. We tell ourselves that other groups suffer too. We comfort ourselves that, if only an endless Middle East conflict were resolved, harmony would return at home. Most disturbingly, perhaps we harbour our own prejudices about Jewish people as a collective and believe, consciously or not, that they are not a group with which we need to concern ourselves.

It is often said that antisemitism is a symptom of a more insidious social disorder. This may be true. But it conversely serves as yet another reason to dismiss it as a problem in itself.

Canada is fortunately far more welcoming and safe than many or most other places on earth. But this is a product of concerted action against discrimination and the celebration of differences. It does not happen by accident.

The latest in a litany of evidence about anti-Jewish attitudes and behaviours in Canada calls out for us to act.

A new, grassroots movement of Canadians is standing with our Jewish neighbours against discrimination. In our unions, on our campuses, in our social circles and our places of worship, at our dinner tables and anywhere that presents an opportunity to advance Canadian values of acceptance, we are making our voices heard against antisemitism.

We invite you to learn more and, if you like, to join us at [UpstandersCanada.com](http://UpstandersCanada.com).

**Patrick Johnson,**  
Director, Upstanders Canada

**Kudos for customer service**

For anyone in need of an honest, reliable auto repair and maintenance shop in the area, I highly recommend the Midas Store on Yonge Street in the south end of Aurora.

Lisa and Matt run a very busy, efficient, friendly shop and are as honest as anyone I ever remember dealing with.

I recently took my car in for what I thought were needed repairs and maintenance. After a thorough evaluation, including a road test, I was informed I didn't need either the repair or the maintenance done at this time!

They have gained a customer for life!

**Doug Kilpatrick**  
Aurora



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To submit a letter to the editor, please send your email to [brock@lpcmedia.ca](mailto:brock@lpcmedia.ca).  
Deadline for submissions is Sunday at 1 p.m.

**Machell's Corners**



**Rediscovering and renewing the ties that bind**



**BROCK'S BANTER**

Brock Weir

In recent weeks, months, and indeed years, we have often talked about a return to some degree of normalcy.

It's something we all want and, as we inch closer to that goal, before the goal posts are invariably moved again, we get a taste of it.

But just what is normalcy these days?

I think you'd be hard-pressed to find anything that is truly "normal" when considering our pre-March of 2020 world. Our lifestyles have changed in many ways. Our priorities have changed. Our workplaces have changed. Even our relationships, some that we may have once held dear, have changed as the challenges of the last two-and-a-half years revealed fault lines in what was once pretty tight and, at first blush, durable.

But fault lines have appeared in just about every facet of what we're doing, some of which can be hard to perceive until you're confronted with it face to face.

This past week, we were able to renew our yearly family tradition of travelling from the GTA to the city of Jamestown, NY, about an hour and a half from the Niagara-area border crossings, for the "annual" Lucille Ball Comedy Festival.

This festival, held in the beloved redhead's hometown, was once a destination for fans to gather and salute the series and the stars and crew members who made everything possible. As the number of available stars and crew members sadly but inevitably dwindled due to the passage of time, the festival itself morphed and its vision has changed.

What was once a weekend of nostalgia has, in many ways, been augmented by just as many opportunities to look forward as its mission is now largely to promote up-and-coming comedy talent.

Ordinarily, it's a time to relax and laugh and reconnect with friends who have also made the pilgrimage an annual event. But this time around, until it was crunch time, I found it difficult to get excited over what was to come.

This was set to be the first time since the start of the global pandemic that I have done any travelling to speak of, save for a day trip here and there in

southern Ontario.

It was certainly set to be my first time setting foot in the United States since 2019 and, as we can all appreciate, there is a perception, whether it is true or not, that it's a place that has changed drastically in the intervening years for myriad reasons that don't need to be mentioned in this column space.

But, despite some reservations, the draw of reconnecting with friends, many of whom I have known for a quarter century this year, helped keep any negative thoughts at bay.

By Tuesday night, we were ready to hit the ground early the next morning, forgoing some of the traditional side trips we make along the way in what we considered a bid to get there "in good time," but what was equally likely to be a way to rip that Band-Aid off as soon as possible.

The trip to our regular border crossing at the Rainbow Bridge was uneventful. A quick spin on the Niagara Scenic Parkway allowed for a bit of refreshing mist to waft through the windows of our non-air-conditioned car, and we went on our merry way.

Nothing much had changed in regards to the border, nor along the highways of this particular section of Western New York – aside from more recent changes in the lineup of personal injury lawyers taking up billboard space along the way, advertising their services just in case!

Getting off the Interstate, however, was a bit of a different story.

The road to Jamestown is, of course, a very modern and well-travelled highway, but the rolling hills and squat green mountains it's carved out of gives the distinct impression that you're stepping back in time.

Yet, road signs are plenty to snap you out of any nostalgic reverie you might have.

"Stop Biden" signs are plenty as a local politico vies for public office

on what seemed to be a pretty weak and solitary platform. In some cases where quaint, bought-from-the-corner-store signs with misplaced and abused apostrophes announced you were passing the driveways of "The Smith's" or "The Jone's" now encouraged "Brandon" to get off his duff.

One garage-side display really struck a chord: a one-two punch of a "F\_\_\_\_ BIDEN" flag, an all too familiar sight on this side of the border with a slight name change (minimal points for creativity), coupled with a Confederate flag on the other side, emblazoned with the legend, "Come and take it from me." The irony of this flag flying in a Union stronghold apparently lost upon the property owner.

Much had indeed changed since we were last year, with the vitriol bubbling over into some unexpected places.

What could possibly await us at our destination?

Harmony – and, of course, a lot of laughs.

It's a testament to the power of Lucille Ball and the legacy of comedy she created and left behind that for a few, all-too-brief days, any political division or discord was able to be folded away and tucked into our respective back pockets in favour of the unifying power of laughter.

As a break from the everyday it was a much-needed balm for the soul and a reminder that as some people work overtime to sow the seeds of division, appreciating what brings us together is never too far away. We just need the opportunities to find them.

And, on a personal note, it was also a potent reminder of what we lost during the pandemic: the chance to gather and share common passions. I'm beginning this week buoyed and re-energized by the experience and heartened by the fact that 25 years of friendship are ties that are as strong and vital as ever before.

If the last several years have taught us anything, it's that the future can be very hard to predict. No matter what we have in store, I'm confident these ties will continue to endure for many years to come.



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Deadline for submissions is Sunday at 1 p.m.



## The Aurora Museum & Archives is feeling... *Whimsical on Wells!*

The Aurora Museum & Archives has a sizeable collection of ceramic pieces adorned with our heritage buildings. Most of these were made in the wake of Canada's 1967 Centennial celebration, but some are much earlier. This tiny commemorative vase (2005.18) bears an image of Aurora High School in its original form (1892-1922), and was likely made in Dresden, Germany around 1910. Rising Sun Lodge, to the right of the school, is also pictured but with the whimsical addition of a steeple – which the building never had!

As a lover of all things literary, one of my favourite activities is to attend author events. There's a buzz in the air like no other when writers, readers and industry professionals come together to celebrate the craft of the written word.

On the Civic Holiday weekend, I attended a book launch in Toronto at which the author opened with a personal land acknowledgement that was so different than the ones I have heard or delivered myself. She ended with a challenge to all present to consider our own relationships with the land, engage with Indigenous struggles to restore and repair these relationships, and to work alongside Indigenous peoples for climate justice and Land Back. Beyond speaking to our place as settlers, the author tasked every one of us to make our acknowledgement actionable.

I considered what I could do to address the injustices that colonialism inflicted on Indigenous peoples. Beyond casting my ballot in elections and showing up at vigils and events in solidarity, I think that the most important role that I can play is to promote the voices of Indigenous writers. Incumbent to all settlers is hearing the lived experiences of Indigenous peoples, past and present. Here are some of the narratives (fiction and memoir) that I think are important for every settler to read.

A Mind Spread Out on the Ground is a courageous and profound meditation from award-winning Haudenosaunee writer, Alicia Elliott. Through a canvas of essays, Elliott



## Welcome to Library Land

By Reccia Mandelcorn

weaves the historic with the personal, addressing the legacy of residential schools, intergenerational trauma, loss of culture and Indigenous sovereignty.

Five Little Indians by Cree author Michelle Good follows five residential school survivors in Vancouver as they each grapple with the trauma they endured in their own ways. The author is the daughter and granddaughter of residential school survivors. Although the book is fiction, it is a composite of the realities of the impact the residential schools have and continue to have on Indigenous people.

It is too easy to dismiss the colonialism and the genocidal policy of residential schools as a shameful past as we move forward to reconciliation. In Seven Fallen Feathers, Anishinaabe journalist Tanya Talaga speaks to the systemic and institutional violence behind the deaths of seven Indigenous youths in Thunder Bay, focusing on the impact that their deaths had on their families.

Jesse Wentz is an Anishinaabe writer and broadcaster whose recent book, Unreconciled: Family, Truth, and Indigenous Resistance, is as

much a manifesto as it is memoir. Wentz exposes the flawed concept of reconciliation and calls on us to demand truth to action in building a new, respectful relationship between the nations of Canada and those of Indigenous peoples.

Over the past few years, opening a meeting or event with a land acknowledgement has become ubiquitous, as if spoken by rote. Novelist and cultural commentator, Stephen Marche, wrote of the need for land acknowledgements "to be simpler, less legalistic, less hypocritical. It must be more than a guilty excuse. It must capture the sense of the basic contradiction at the heart of the new Canada... and that responsibility begins the moment you enter history." (New Yorker)

My takeaway action as a response to this weekend's challenge delivered from the stage of the Imperial Pub is to not read from a scripted paragraph when delivering my land acknowledgement, but to write a specific and personal one each occasion as part of my daily responsibility as a settler on these lands.

I will not end as I usually do with my recent reads; rather I encourage you to read the titles recommended in this column. All are available at Aurora Public Library.

*Reccia Mandelcorn is the Manager, Community Collaboration at Aurora Public Library. The opinions expressed in this column reflect her personal thoughts about the engagement of community with their public library.*

## 2022 Municipal election – some early thoughts

The Blue Jays picked up a couple of players at the trade deadline recently. Hopefully, this will help them secure a wild card spot and from there, maybe start a long playoff run.

A man can dream, can't he?

Anyway, there is another fantastic sporting event that will take place later on this year. It is the municipal election scheduled for Monday, October 24, 2022.

Some other important dates on this electoral calendar include Friday, August 19, which is the deadline for candidates to file a nomination, withdraw a nomination or change office.

Friday, September 23, is the day that final spending limits are provided to candidates and registered third party advertisers.

The Town website has lots of good information about the upcoming election at [www.aurora.ca/en/your-government/elections.aspx](http://www.aurora.ca/en/your-government/elections.aspx).

We do have one declared candidate for Mayor.\*

But there are a lot of questions out there, regarding this race, to wit:

- Will the Mayor seek to retain the chains of office?
- Will anyone from the present Council run against his Worship?
- What will the three most important issues be?

Questions/idle speculations regarding the current Council:

- How many of the current council will run again?
- As we now have a ward system, will any of the current council run against their seat mates?
- How many people from our community will seek office this time?

Lots to digest, but I am not going to try



## FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE

Stephen Somerville

to answer any of the above this week; I will save this for some future columns.

One thing that you will not see from The Auroran, which goes back to when Ron Wallace was the owner/publisher, is this newspaper endorsing any mayoralty/council candidates.

As Ron told me back in 2010 when I asked him:

"Publicity, as you know, good, bad or indifferent, is still publicity, and any public mention of a candidate, via column particularly, is a plus for whoever is mentioned. The Auroran will not select a slate nor recommend who should be the mayor of the community."

(I also like the fact that a lot of editorial space is reserved for reader feedback; this is one of the key reasons for the success of the newspaper. I have changed my mind on some issues as a direct result of various letters to the editor.)

An interesting side bar to all this is the need for some changes to our municipal election laws.

I am in favor of the ward system.

The main reason being that in talking to many first-time municipal office seekers over the years in Aurora, the number one

issue they had to overcome was trying to mount a community-wide campaign. It is very much an uphill battle against long term incumbents. It can be expensive and very time consuming.

Along with the above, I also kindly suggest that we need to make another fundamental change at some point as well: the introduction of term limits.

Napoleon is alleged to have once said that the battlefields are littered with the bodies of irreplaceable soldiers. He could just have easily been speaking about modern day politics.

Since it seems that many public figures stay well past their "best before" date, we need to help the politicians help themselves.

Mandating term limits is one way to lend assistance.

I believe that a councillor should be limited to serving two terms.

Mayors should also be limited to two terms.

If an individual becomes mayor after already having served two four-year terms as a councillor, then he or she would have served sixteen years by the time they are through. This should be more than enough time to implement or achieve any legislative agenda that they initially brought to the table.

Public life is fundamentally about the nobility and selflessness of public service. It should not be about longevity; it should simply be about service.

Next Up: Transparency in local political ads

*\*(Editor's Note: Mr. Somerville's column was filed before incumbent Tom Mrakas filed his nomination papers on Tuesday morning)*

Stephen can be contacted at [stephengsomerville@yahoo.com](mailto:stephengsomerville@yahoo.com)



## Parsa's Perspective

Michael Parsa, MPP  
Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill

Four years ago, you first elected me as your local Member of Provincial Parliament on a promise to stand up for Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill, and bring growth and prosperity to our community.

I never lose sight of what an honour it is to serve our vibrant riding in the Ontario Legislature.

I am proud of what we have accomplished over the past four years.

Working together, we've opened new schools, invested in small businesses and bounced back stronger than ever from the pandemic.

Fast forward to now, I am so grateful to have been re-elected by our community to continue the progress we've made.

With your support, I renew my commitment and promise to our riding to stand up for the best interest of Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill and everyone who calls it home.

I have no doubt in my mind that Ontario is the best place in the world to live. People come from around the world to follow their dreams and start a family here, but it simply cannot be at its best until every Ontarian taken care of. And that begins with ensuring everyone in this province has a place to call home.

Ontario is facing a housing crisis. Too many families are unable to afford a home and too many people have given up entirely on the dream of entering the housing market. This must change if we want to continue building our province up.

That is why the government has made it a top priority to solve the housing crisis and make life more affordable for families across Ontario. To date, we have listened to expert advice and are now implementing steps to cut down unnecessary red tape that prevent homes from being built, while speeding up the approval process so we can get shovels in the ground quicker.

We've capped the Rent Increase Guideline at 2.5%, well below the rate of inflation, to give families facing rising costs predictability and stability. And we've taken action to make life more affordable from cutting the gas tax, to scrapping license plate sticker fees.

I know that the housing crisis will not be solved overnight, and that it will take some hard work. But the government will work relentlessly to make sure everyone in this province has a place to come home to.

As the upcoming session of the Legislature gets underway on August 8, I look forward to working with my fellow MPPs to keep building Ontario.

We will work collaboratively with all levels of government to address the challenges of our time and ensure our best days continue to lie ahead.

As always, I want you to know that I am here to serve you: If you require assistance with any provincial matters, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

*Michael Parsa's constituency office is located at 13085 Yonge Street suite 201 in Richmond Hill. You can reach the office at 905-773-6250 or emailing us through [michael.parsa@pc.ola.org](mailto:michael.parsa@pc.ola.org).*

## THIS WEEK'S NEW POLL

Will you miss Aurora's at-large system of Council?

Yes No Unsure

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Previous Poll Results

Did the Pope's apology on residential schools go far enough?

RESULTS TO DATE	YES	NO	UNSURE
August 9, 2022	30%	30%	40%

# Thousands of lives touched by Blue Door Shelters over last 40 years

From page 1

by their work and where they want to be in the future.

“When Blue Door Shelters first got started, it was a community and groundswell of people saying we should do something for the most vulnerable in our community, not really knowing the extent of it,” he says. “In fact, it is only in the last 10 years through point-in-time counts that we’re really starting to get an idea of how many people are experiencing homelessness in any given year right throughout the Region.

“It was that groundswell of ‘let’s do something, let’s look after our neighbours who might not have a safe place to call home’ and it has grown to where we have emergency housing for men, families, youth, and now secondary housing for senior men, a program called Inclusion for 2SLGBTQ+ youth, and a

social enterprise called Construct. Construct is something [informed by our past] not having success just putting people into any old job with precarious hours that may not pay a living wage; this pays a living wage, it’s meaningful work as we desperately need people in the trades.”

Throughout York Region, their Leeder Place shelter serves 15 families each night. Their Porter Place men’s shelter offers a place for 30 each day, while Kevin’s Place, their shelter for youth, serves 12 each night. Each shelter works in tandem and Blue Door, in turn, has partnered with several community organizations such as Belinda’s Place, Inn from the Cold, 360 Kids, LOFT, Yellow Brick House and more to make sure the community is best served.

It’s a concerted effort to ensure they’re not working in silos, says Braithwaite, and they have found

that when they work together they get a lot more done.

But there is still much more work to be done before homelessness can be considered a thing of the past.

When Braithwaite joined Blue Door Shelters three years ago, it was a group he said was primarily focused on emergency housing. It is what they had done since the beginning and had done quite well – but it was also a model, he says, that needed to change.

“We needed to change from just a caretaking perspective to a housing focus to say, ‘You’re here, we want to wrap services around you, get you on a housing journey, get you a key to your own front door where you can have friends over for coffee,’ and that housing focus change was outside emergency housing,” he explains.

Part of the goal was to have what he describes as “secondary housing” where people can have “semi-independent living” with some rental supports.

“I think it was Day 3 on the job when Seneca College put out their report on 2SLGBTQ+ youth saying, ‘We don’t feel safe in what’s available, so we’re staying on the streets.’ We wanted to address that, looking at how do we prevent people from going into homelessness? We can’t end it if new people are always coming in [so it is a matter of] looking at that preventative piece instead of just the reactive piece, which is emergency housing and reacting to it.”

It is something of a joke among the administration at Blue Door Shelters that the ultimate goal is to work to put themselves out of a job, but there is a grain of truth in there. They would love the need to no longer be there, but without some key supports from all levels of government, the need will always be there – albeit with some shifts.

“I look at countries like Finland that had 600+ emergency beds for people and now have 52 and has been the first country to proclaim they’ve ended homelessness,” he says. “That took a lot of time looking at all sorts of different options: semi-independent housing, independent housing, shared housing – all these different models and doing that. They did work themselves out of a job in a sense and I would love that, where we would need housing support workers instead of emergency workers and to see that emergency number stay put and see all those other pieces grow so people aren’t entering into that.

That would be amazing in 10 years if we only needed about 20 emergency beds because we have all these different housing options for people that are affordable and supportive.”

At the moment, Blue Door Shelters offers just over 100 emergency beds, out of the 200 available in the Region, a geographic area that has approximately 1.1 million people. The City of Toronto, on the other hand, is an area with about 3 million people has 9,000 emergency beds.

“The answer isn’t to have thousands more emergency beds but different, affordable and safe housing options for people,” says Braithwaite. “We’re looking forward to social purpose real estate. Blue Door has to be creative and work with all levels of government to retain housing and get housing into the hands of organizations like Blue Door where it will be truly affordable, rent geared to income, and stay affordable for a long period of time because we own that housing without carrying a large amount of debt on it. We see for every new home that’s built that is affordable we lose 15 to the private sector so we need to double down and do the real hard work. That is the answer moving forward; to build all sorts of affordable housing.

“One example I will give you is Blue Door worked with Parks Canada and Rouge Valley Park, which has 44 vacant homes. They don’t have the capital to fix them. Blue Door was able to secure the capital through different grants, our Construct program, along with our friends’ similar program called Building Up did the work and turned that vacant home into a duplex and in return Canada Parks still owns the home but we have 30 years of rent-free housing for Blue Door and we’re able to turn that into rent geared to income housing for two families. That is the future. That is what is going to make the biggest difference: units of truly affordable housing in the hands of non-profits like Blue Door.

“One of the misconceptions is that homelessness is a choice. Quite often you hear the best cure to homelessness is a job. There are so many people who due to their physical or mental health situation and life are not able to work right now but everyone deserves a safe and affordable place to call home regardless of the situation. There is some judgement there. The gap between what’s affordable and what people have has just grown. It is becoming increasingly tricky.”



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# Study will look at finding long-lasting solutions for homelessness

BY BROCK WEIR  
EDITOR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

As Canada's housing and affordability crises work hand to hand to make finding a roof to put over your head more difficult than ever before, particularly for youth, Blue Door Shelters is partnering with community organizations to identify real, long-lasting solutions to the problem.

Thanks to some financial assistance from the Hoedown Community Fund, a pot of money established by Magna International to support 30 local non-profits who would have otherwise benefited from the Wild West Hoedown, Blue Door is spearheading a study to show to the Federal and Provincial governments that improved income support can make a huge difference.

"We're always trying to push the limits a little bit because what we're doing right now is not getting the job done," says Michael Braithwaite, Executive Director of York Region's Blue Door Shelters. "This fund is going to allow us to target youth-specific housing first with an income support project that Blue Door is working on in partnership with Observatory on Homelessness, Way Home Canada, and many local partners to try and push the boundaries a little bit on what's possible."

Social assistance rates, whether one looks at Ontario Works or ODSP, are below the levels they were in 1995, says Braithwaite. At that time, there was a 21 per cent cut and, of course, since the mid-90s the cost of just about everything has gone up, particularly rent, food, and transportation.

This is especially felt by youth just starting out, he adds.

"The idea behind this project is to show with some income supports and wraparound supports how youth can just power through and not experience homelessness and not experience homelessness in the future as well."

Joining in the support of the project, he adds, is the United Way which is "always looking for innovative ways to prevent and end homelessness."



Another look at income supports is a key way to fight homelessness, says Michael Braithwaite of Blue Door Shelters.

Auroran photo by Brock Weir

By the end of the study, Braithwaite says they and the partners are "pretty sure" it will show just how well all demographics will benefit from income supports, even if the type of supports that are most appropriate might differ from demo to demo.

When the global pandemic hit, the number of youth seeking emergency housing or a shelter bed dropped considerably, but Braithwaite says it is not because the problem was "suddenly solved" – other pandemic-related supports helped. Coming out of the pandemic, however, he says "some of the worst is ahead of us."

"Rent has climbed and for some people on social assistance they may have \$700 a month, if you're on a disability \$1,200 a month. Your average monthly rent is about \$1,400 for a one-bedroom apartment. The Globe & Mail recently put out something saying that in order to afford a one-bedroom apartment in the GTA, you're looking at a

benchmark of 30 per cent of your income being spent on housing and a household would have to have \$90,000 in income. Many youth are far, far below that.

"It has become tougher even to rent a room at home. Our focus is how do we create purpose-built affordable rental across York Region where we lack it? How can we get more and more properties into the hands of non-profits like Blue Door, Inn from the Cold where it will remain rent-geared-to-income for the long-term, etc. It has become increasingly difficult for youth starting out if they don't have the support of a family to lean on to get safe and affordable housing.

In the last Point-in-Time count on homelessness conducted by the United Way and York Region, numbers showed that several demographics were "over-represented" as experiencing homelessness in the area, including Indigenous men and

2SLGBTQ+ adults.

Last year, Blue Door opened an inclusion program with the support of the North Pine Foundation, to promote supported housing and semi-independent living due to an identified gap.

Support from the Hoedown foundation will, in addition to the study itself, have off-shoot benefits across the board.

"Magna's been so great in saying, 'Where do you want to apply this?'" says Braithwaite of the grant. "If we prevent new youth from coming into homelessness it will free up spots not only for Blue Door with Kevin's Place that supports male youth and our inclusion program for 2SLGBTQ+ youth, but also for 360 Kids, Salvation Army and others who are doing youth programming and emergency housing. We won't have new people entering into it, so it will free up spaces for people who are in need of emergency housing."

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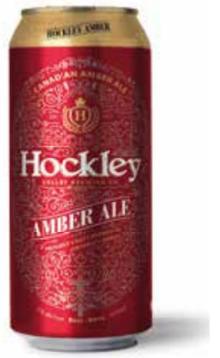




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## CEO brings a very human touch to state-of-the-art animal hospital

By Mark Pavilons

Patient-focused care is the same whether you're talking about people or animals.

King Animal Hospital will deliver it in spades.

Healthcare executive and hospital CEO Tracy Jones is assembling a top-notch team of small and large animal health professionals to make the hospital world-class.

In fact, the facility, when it opens its doors in early 2023, will be one of a kind, with almost unmatched resources and equipment.

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That's Jones's goal in a nutshell. And she feels proud and blessed to be at the helm of this exciting project that will touch many lives.

Building is progressing on the facility owned by the renowned Dog Tales animal rescue facility. Situated on a beautiful rural landscape on the 19th Sideroad. The veterinary hospital is a work of art. It's not only beautiful, but it will be the most technologically advanced facility of its kind.

The hospital boasts some 58,000 square feet on four levels and includes

an outdoor arena. It will serve mainly horses, dogs, cats and some exotic animals such as birds and lizards.

It will be a 24-hour emergency referral hospital serving Ontario and beyond. It will be a welcome addition to this part of the province, known as "horse country."

The centre will have the latest in MRI and CT scanners, ultrasounds, x-rays, along with water treadmills for both equine and dogs, and even hyperbaric oxygen treatment for dogs. Jones said all of this combines to create fast, efficient, often life-saving processes. Having x-ray, CT, MRI and expertise under one roof leads to more timely diagnosis and faster treatment. For animals like performance horses, this saves valuable time, travel and scheduling for the owners.

King Animal Hospital's treatment doesn't end when the procedure does. Facility staff will offer a full line of post-op care and rehabilitation, all of which will improve the animal's recovery and overall health.

With such high-caliber equipment and staff, you'd think it would come with hefty charges. Jones and owners Robert and Danielle Scheinberg are keeping fees competitive and following industry fee schedules. They're adamant that every animal should



Tracy Jones

Photo by Mark Pavilons

have access to the most compassionate and committed care possible.

The Scheinbergs paid very close attention to every detail. They wanted to design an aesthetically pleasing building that fits in with the rural landscape. It looks like a European resort or chalet, but inside it means business.

The main emphasis is on animal care and animal welfare, something that drives everything the Scheinbergs

do.

Jones said the full staff complement will hit 120 when it's fully operational.

She wants to constantly monitor, track and measure the flow for efficiency but more importantly the quality of care. The learning curve will also be the perfect opportunity for improving, learning and sharing information.

Jones said they also want to embrace the community and share the knowledge. The second floor will house workshop and educational facilities, hosting students from both Sheridan and Seneca Colleges and universities nearby and abroad.

Jones pointed out that an investment of \$1 million in AV equipment alone is a testament to the idea of sharing knowledge. Surgeries will be recorded and used for training purposes for staff.

All surgeons and specialists are board certified and Jones said she wants the facility to become the "employer of choice" for performing healthcare professionals.

Running the facility is like a running a human hospital and taking care of staff is a priority.

Jones has more than 20 years' experience leading multi-disciplinary health care teams of up to 1,500 employees across multiple sites, and managing operating budgets up to \$100 million. Her previous experience includes president/CEO roles within long term care, retirement, home care and organizations offering health care software solutions.

As CEO of the Yee Hong Centre for Geriatric Care, Jones received the distinction of having Canada's Most Admired Corporate Culture.

She's also experienced in the non-profit sector and oversaw planning capital projects.

Jones wants to ensure employees' mental health is supported, noting care of this nature is often quite emotional.

She wants to foster a supportive culture and a "walking the halls" approach to get constant feedback from staff. She aims to be a visible leader.

Staff will also get to enjoy the spacious grounds and nearby walking trails.

There's no doubt King Animal Hospital will be a jewel in many ways. Not the least of which is a shining example of a robust team of professionals who will help shape modern veterinary care in ways we can't imagine.

You can contact Jones at [tjones@kinganimalhospital.com](mailto:tjones@kinganimalhospital.com)

For more on Dog Tales, visit [dogtales.ca](http://dogtales.ca).



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# Classic quintet saluted at Concerts in the Park



The Travelling Milburys – a tribute to The Travelling Wilburys, featuring the music of Bob Dylan, George Harrison, Jeff Lynn, Roy Orbison and Tom Petty – headlined the July 27 installment of Aurora’s popular Concerts in the Park summer series. (Left Column) Band members brought the iconic acts to life. (Right Column, Top to Bottom) Families filled Town Park. Volunteers and staff from the Town helped make the event a reality. Bryan and Dasha. **Auroran photos by Glenn Rodger**

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# Desire brings popular sounds of U2 to Concerts in the Park series

BY BROCK WEIR  
EDITOR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Aurora's Concerts in the Park series will continue next Wednesday with a homecoming of sorts.

Desire: A Tribute to U2 is no stranger to Aurora, but when they hit the band shell at Town Park on August 17, they will bring with them a unique style of showmanship that has only been honed during the global pandemic.

Since 2020, the popular tribute band had to find new ways to connect with audiences and, through the process, honed their craft.

"Nothing is like a live event to see people singing along to songs and get back to normalcy," says band member Gord Sabota. "Playing live is like second-nature to us and once [these opportunities] came back again we realized how much we love it and how much we missed it. It was incredible."

"While we were in lockdown, we invented an incredible multimedia show that we've never brought to Aurora. We bring at least six to eight TVs on stage, kind of how U2 did it in the 90s, so we're going to open up a multimedia show and let the audience kind of see U2 in real time."

U2 is a band that has entertained music lovers since its foundation in Ireland in 1976.

It's a band that has remarkable longevity – as does Desire.

Desire has, at its core, been together

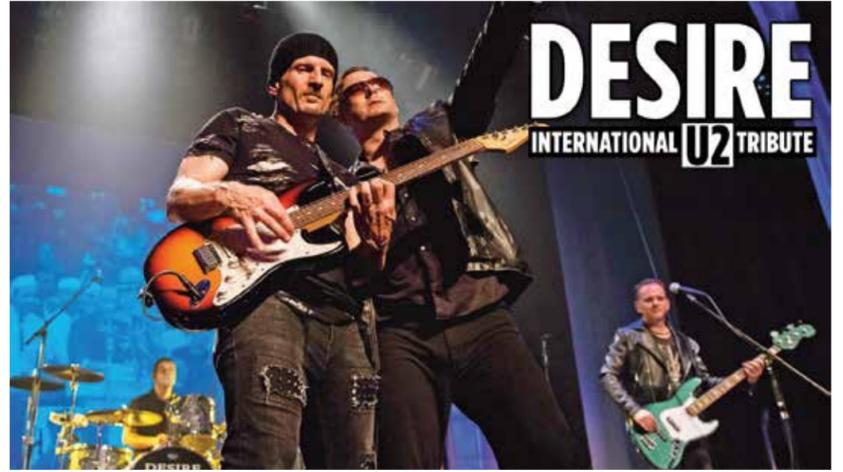
for decades, even before paying tribute to the music of Bono and The Edge was even considered.

"We were playing in a high school band from the time we were 14-years-old to 18 with all the same lineup," says Sabota, adding they were all childhood friends who grew up all on the same block. "Then we had variations of the band and different cover bands [but] we went back and started this tribute band with the original four members and it makes it extra-special. We feed off each other and we know how to bring an energy to a show. The crowd connects to that energy."

And the feeling is mutual for the band.

"It's the energy and the songs that connect with a crowd," he continues. "I have been in the same position where I have seen a band I wasn't really looking forward to seeing and they just blew my mind. It doesn't matter in the end who you are paying tribute to, as long as people are enjoying themselves that's what's most important."

"We're not there to show off, we're there to enjoy a night of music with an audience and that's the reason we play, really," adds band member Dave Dellavalle. "We're lucky enough to have these incredible songs already written for us and we get the pleasure of sharing it with an audience who grew up with them and that never gets old. Even though we play the same hits, it never gets old because it is different every time. They are incredibly written



Contributed photo

songs, which are a blessing to play, and it relates to the audience.

"Since we're so involved with the band, it is kind of nice that things still progress with them. Every two and a half years, they offer up a new album, and it is like starting fresh again. You have something new for the audience and it is like starting fresh again. Probably most tribute bands are [saluting] bands that have disbanded or [musicians who] have passed away. It's kind of unusual that these guys are still going. I don't

think it gets old for any of us!"

Concerts in the Park take place at Town Park each Wednesday from 7 – 9 p.m. through August 31. Admission is free but donations to the Aurora Food Pantry are encouraged.

Upcoming performances include The Mudmen on August 24 before the series closes August 31 with Epic Elton: A Tribute to Elton John.

For more information, visit [aurora.ca/summerconcerts](http://aurora.ca/summerconcerts).

## Historic Readman House set for new lease on life

Council gives tentative approval to four-storey apartment behind heritage home

BY BROCK WEIR  
EDITOR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Aurora's Historic Readman House, which has sat vacant on Yonge Street, just south of Hillary House National Historic site is set to get a new lease on life.

Council this summer gave its tentative approval to a series of zoning bylaw amendments which will not only pave the way for an apartment building and two floors of underground parking, but the complete restoration of the property's historic brown-brick home back into a single-family dwelling.

The project is the result of consultation with the Town and community groups, including the Aurora Historical Society, which owns the adjacent Hillary House property, and the Ontario Heritage Trust.

"We made a commitment to work with these groups...and the public to work towards a development which responded to their concerns," said Bruce Hall of The Planning Partnership, speaking in favour of the proposal as a delegate to Council.

This work has included working with the Society (AHS) to ensure any impacts on Hillary House are

"minimized or mitigated, especially during construction" and a binding legal agreement with the group.

"Since the development submission was made, there have been a number of significant refinements to the development proposal, including reducing the height, the GFA (gross floor area), the number of units, refining and massing..." Hall continued. "[The groups] are generally satisfied with the way we have dealt with these issues, that we listened and responded to them and they want to continue working with us through the site plan process as well as construction."

Council was generally supportive of the plan, but there were some unanswered questions.

One was posed by Councillor Rachel Gilliland who said while some of the stakeholder groups were satisfied with the plan, there were still some outstanding comments from nearby property owners about landscaping, constructing noise and vibration.

There were also outstanding issues related to stormwater management and flooding.

Mr. Hall said these were issues being worked on.

Speaking out against the plan was Councillor Wendy Gaertner who reiterated her opposition to having any part of the plan encroach onto environmental protection (EP) lands, but

Continued on page 13

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## York United forward joins Vancouver Whitecaps 2



By Robert Belardi

It was a memorable time donning the York United colours for Lowell Wright. The 18-year-old Brampton native came to the Canadian Premier League at the tender age of 16 and immediately turned quite a few heads.

Wright scored in his debut with the club in the Island Games, to become the youngest goal scorer ever in CPL history.

Now, after 44 appearances, seven goals and five assists later, Wright will be taking his talents to western Canada to join Vancouver Whitecaps 2.

Ahead of his move out west, Wright, told CanPL.ca's Kristan Jack, it was a "dream come true" when he came to York United to play pro soccer and he couldn't be more excited to move on to bigger things.

In his early life, Wright was the team captain of Toronto FC's U-12 team and also played for Sigma FC's youth team.

In 2019, Wright joined the Woodbridge Strikers' youth team, scoring 42 goals for the U-17 side.

After appearing for the League 1 Ontario Woodbridge Strikers team, Wright made his way to the Canadian Premier League and now is on the cusp of being a part of the MLS.

Earlier this year, Wright was also called up for U-20 Canada side and played two friendlies against Costa Rica. In June, he made the team for the 2022 CONCACAF U-20 Championship.

With this move, Wright will be an excellent acquisition for the Whitecaps 2.

The 6-foot-forward is tough on the ball and has excellent finishing qualities any coach would love in a striker.

York, who suffered a 2-0 defeat on the road against Valour FC on Sunday, could have used Wright's services.

The Nine Stripes, take on FC Edmonton at home this Sunday. Kick-off is at 4.00 p.m.



Tristan Tobin, with her horse Dartagnan Z, is representing Canada this week at the equestrian North American Youth Championships in Traverse City, Michigan.

## Local girl proud to represent Team Canada in Michigan

By Robert Belardi

Long-time King Weekly Sentinel newspaper carrier Tristan Tobin has a lot more to her than just bringing the paper to your door.

The 14-year-old King Township native will be representing Team Canada at the North American Youth Championships in Traverse City, Mich. this week.

It has been quite a long journey for Tobin, and one that began right at the height of COVID.

While enduring the hardships of online school, she made it a goal of hers to get into equestrian and to earn a spot on the Young Riders team. Throughout her time, Tobin also crafted a lengthy power-point presentation to showcase her dreams in front of both of her parents, Kyle Tobin and Jenny Dwight.

"COVID taught me to work independently and remotely so I can stay connected and keep up with my

classes," Tobin said in a statement.

Following endless hours of practice, Tobin achieved her goal of getting comfortable enough in handling a 1.20 height.

With her sister Reese as her inspiration, Tobin will be riding her sister's jump horse, Dartagnan Z.

Nicknamed "Dart," the Zangersheide Gelding horse is her trusty side-kick as Tobin follows in her sister's path. Reese was a former competitive rider.

In a letter written to the Tobin family from Chief Executive Officer from Equestrian Canada, Meg Krueger, Tobin was highly praised for her "perseverance, adaptability and strength of character."

Tobin and "Dart" have been training in Schomberg at Gryphon Farms by Mac and Christi McQuaker. Tobin, is humbled and extremely excited to represent her country.

The NAYC runs from August 9 to 14.

## Aurora golfer won peewee division in Barrie

By Robert Belardi

Aurora native Oscar Lin won the peewee boys division at the Maple Leaf Junior Golf Tour Ontario Series held at Settler's Ghost Golf Club in Barrie at the end of July.

Lin shot an 80 on the first day and a 76 on the second day for a total of 156. Just in behind him, was East Garafraxa native Austin Reid, who also scored an 80 on his first day and a 79 on his second. Uxbridge native Kieran Small came in third.

Settler's Ghost is a tough par 72 and every golfer in every age group didn't shoot too far off of the mark.

In the junior boy's division, Barrie native Leighton Wright shot 79 on day one and 69 on day two, beating out Gabe Tovell by 10 strokes.

In the juvenile boy's division,

Huntsville native Josh Lane took home first place, shooting 74 and 73 respectively.

In the bantam boys' division, Mississauga native Barron Mundy, just like Wright, shot a 79 on day one and shot under par (68) on day two. Mundy had to take down Oro-Medonte's Spencer Shropshire in a playoff to win it all.

As for the girl's division, the U15 tournament saw Bowmanville native Elliana Buhagiar shoot an 81 and a 75 to win by four strokes.

The 15-19 girls' division saw Leila Aghabi from Dubai defeat Ava Di Martino in a playoff to bring it home.

To look for future competitions to see if any other local golfers will take part, please head to [maplejt.com](http://maplejt.com).

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## Aurora Votes 2022

# Sandra Humfryes seeks re-election in Ward 1



Contributed photo

Council Candidate Sandra Humfryes

**BY BROCK WEIR**  
EDITOR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

*As the number of names on Aurora's Municipal Ballot continue to climb, this week The Auroran begins its traditional profile series of all candidates looking for a seat at the table. This week: incumbent Sandra Humfryes, who is seeking election in Ward 1.*

Since she was first elected to Aurora Council in 2010, much has taken place – but there is “still a lot to be done,” according to Sandra Humfryes, who is seeking her fourth

Council term in Ward 1.

Ms. Humfryes filed her nomination papers last week, stated she was “really excited” for the future of Aurora and wants to see “some of the incredible initiatives that were launched” over the last two Council terms be brought to fruition, particularly Aurora Town Square.

“I am really looking forward to seeing Aurora Town Square come to fruition with some of the visions that we really believe in in terms of the types of attractions that will be coming to this Town through the performing arts centre, to Town Square activities,

and all to really focus on downtown revitalization and really see it come to a certain point where there's lots of traction and people from other municipalities come to Downtown Aurora as a destination.

“I am also really excited about the ward system in general. Politics is very personal to me and what I mean by that is I love working with people who have concerns, problems, want to see improvements in the Town, or want to volunteer. I love to work with residents and help them with whatever their issues or concerns could be. I really thrive on personally helping to

make a difference in people's lives.”  
In the term of Council that has largely drawn to a close, Humfryes was among the lawmakers who voted to adopt a ward system to replace the outgoing at-large system of government where, up until 2018, Aurora residents voted for six Council members to represent the community as a whole.

Now, as the system changes to residents getting to vote for one mayoral candidate to represent the entire community and a council candidate to represent one of six wards, Humfryes says it will allow those who are ultimately elected to form a more personal relationship with voters and the communities they hope to represent.

“It is to build those personal relationships with the residents and really understand what they want to see in this Town, what their concerns are, and...help them get to a point where their concerns or ideas are listened to and come to fruition,” she says. “I feel that going from an at-large to a ward system will allow more of that focus and the opportunity for those ideas to be really understood.

“You're more focused now but that doesn't necessarily mean you're only focused on Ward 1 because that is absolutely not true. Ward 1 will be where a resident can reach out to a Councillor, but overall it is absolutely imperative for me to make sure our Town has the right recreational spaces or services and... I believe it will be the best of both worlds. I am really excited about building those personal relationships with the residents and, if elected, I really hope I can make a difference for them in their day-to-day lives.”

Humfryes says she has chosen to run in Ward 1 because, as a resident of the area, these day-to-day concerns are something she shares. Another facet of her decision to run in Ward 1 is the number of heritage resources in the area, a subject which she has always been passionate about.

“I have run on heritage and that is something I absolutely honour and respect,” she says. “I have a bond with all areas, don't get me wrong, but my connection with heritage is strong and I just felt it was the right fit for me.”

As a long-serving member of Council, Humfryes has served alongside two mayors and several councillors and this, she says, is a sign that she “gets along with everyone” to move the important business of Aurora forward.

“I really truly respect ideas around the table,” she says. “I listen to them, and that helps me make the fulsome decision. You listen to residents, you do your research, then you listen to perspectives around the table. [As a Councillor] you look at large issues when you're discussing issues of the Town and then when you focus on your areas it just provides almost like a subject matter expert [for your ward] so that you understand those local areas, those local issues, and what the impact of some of the larger areas of Town will be on those areas. If anything, it will enhance our knowledge of the impact of larger changes to our designated wards.

“Whoever is elected and gets that ward to look after, you're truly responsible for that area dedicated to the ward you're accountable for the residents...and they have someone to go to. Over my 12 years in politics, many times I get asked by the newcomers to our Town, ‘Who is your Councillor? Who do I go to?’ I think it will build that relationship – the one-on-one, you start to know each other and it becomes a good relationship and advocacy for that Councillor, for sure.

“I hope I can earn that honour.”

*The series will continue next week.*



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# Downtown Aurora "all shook up" for September street party

BY BROCK WEIR  
EDITOR  
LOCAL JOURNALISM  
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Dance the night away while discovering businesses in Aurora's Downtown Core next month as the Downtown Aurora BIA hosts its annual street party.

Set for September 10, this is the third street party to be hosted by the Downtown Aurora BIA, building on the success of last year's disco theme, featuring the music of ABBA and the Bee Gees.

The search for this year's theme wasn't too hard – it was just under organizers' blue suede shoes.

"Last year, we had our theme of Stayin' Alive but this year we're going with an Elvis Presley theme and doing four back-to-back Elvis bands celebrating the decades and greatest hits of Elvis," says Shelley Ware, Special Events Coordinator for the Town of Aurora, who is working on planning the event alongside the BIA team.

"We're looking at décor plans, activities, photo ops, and we're hoping at least one of the downtown eateries creates a special Elvis cocktail for the night. There are so many fun things you can do with that theme."

Elvis tributes are always popular, she says, referencing the ongoing success of the Collingwood Elvis Festival.

"There's a new resurgence with Elvis, especially with the new movie that has been released," she says, referring to the new feature film directed by Baz Luhrmann starring Austin Butler as the titular King of Rock and Roll. "It is also the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Presley's death so things have just lined up – not to mention



that Elvis is just fun.

"We're working right now on securing the restaurants and the BIA businesses to set up their display out on Yonge Street and we're entrenched right now in logistics such as road closures, emergency planning and that type of stuff, but once we get that [finalized] we'll have more time to plan the fun side of this and [lean in] to our theme.

"We really want to take advantage of Machell's Alley, which is already a successful concept, by taking that to a new level. Mark your calendars, do not make other plans, because this is the place to go and celebrate. Whether you're an Elvis fan or not, come on down, feel the energy, the atmosphere, and we really do promise it will be a unique and memorable experience."

*Further details will be announced soon at [downtownaurorabia.com](http://downtownaurorabia.com).*

## Historic Readman House set for new lease on life

From page 10

as Council debated the issue, Councillor Sandra Humfries, who serves on the Town's Heritage Advisory Committee (HAC) said from a historical standpoint the committee was pleased with what was being proposed.

"[HAC] felt the proposal was complimentary in terms of the intent of the new build and it would go well," said Councillor Humfries. "There weren't many concerns; there was discussion around the look and feel of the aesthetics, but they were very in favour. We (HAC) tried to steer away from the planning piece and focus on heritage. This is development that needs to happen and it will be valuable to our community.

"HAC was really thankful for the collaboration between the developer and Hillary House. They really do see this as something that is going to be really well for the Town of Aurora in general."

Town Planner Marco Ramunno underscored these points, adding, "The Aurora Historical Society is [in full support] as well, and the Ontario Heritage Trust was also in support and they hold an easement over the driveway that is shared by Hillary House in the proposal – total

support from all those agencies."

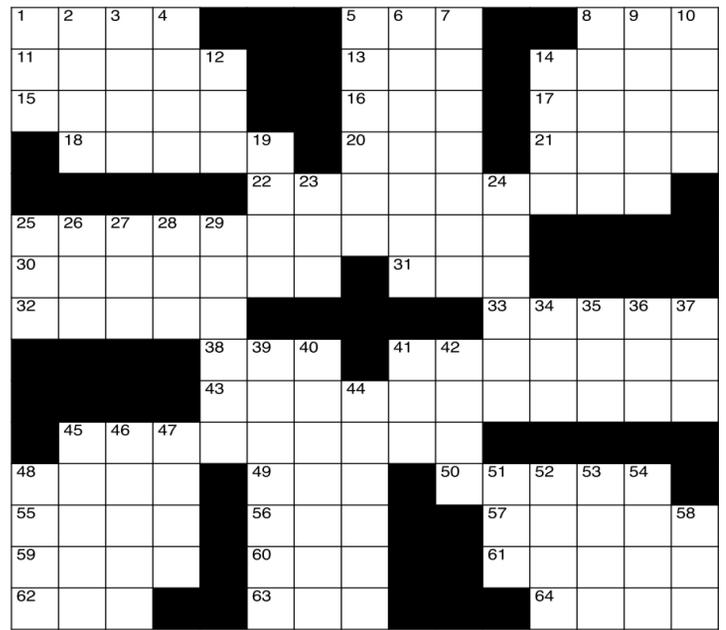
Mayor Tom Mrakas agreed with Councillor Humfries that there were "a lot of positives" with the development proposal, particularly taking a historic Yonge Street home and bringing it "back to its former glory."

"That is a part that we encourage and we are very happy to see this is going to be happening," he said. "Ultimately, this is the type of thing we want to encourage and we want to see. We also talk a lot about the Missing Middle, the housing crisis; this is going to provide units that are going to be right in our downtown core within our Official Plan height requirements... I think it is everything we have asked for. The applicant has worked with us, worked with the residents, has worked with the Heritage Trust, has worked with the Historical Society and has come up with a plan that not only provides that Missing Middle and more units within our downtown core through revitalization and it will help us grow the downtown.

"It will also restore an important piece of our history and I think ultimately that is what we always ask for: to make sure that history will be here for another 150 years."

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# CROSSWORD



### CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Breezed through
- 5. Time units (abbr.)
- 8. Pigeon's murmur
- 11. Moves aside in fright
- 13. Partner to "ahh"
- 14. Taxis
- 15. Monetary units of Turkey
- 16. Returned material authorization (abbr.)
- 17. Prolific Italian opera composer
- 18. Restaurants
- 20. One's grandmother
- 21. Ancient Greek City
- 22. Italian mountain ranges
- 25. Data
- 30. Acted in an obedient way
- 31. Autonomic nervous system
- 32. Not on the up-and-up
- 33. Mock lightly
- 38. Mimic
- 41. Built
- 43. A neighborhood
- 45. Inflammation of the kidneys
- 48. Semitic fertility god
- 49. Temporary name of Seaborgium
- 50. Wise people
- 55. Tear down
- 56. \_\_\_-fi (slang)
- 57. Diamond weight
- 59. Frosted
- 60. Predecessor to EU
- 61. Makes changes to
- 62. Some are secret
- 63. Tooth caregiver
- 64. Old English poet

### CLUES DOWN

- 1. Sign language
- 2. In style
- 3. Norwegian river
- 4. People with impaired hearing
- 5. Large stinging paper wasp
- 6. Bucharest is its capital
- 7. River in Ireland
- 8. Type of TV
- 9. Double-reed instruments
- 10. Spanish motorcycle manufacturer
- 12. Midway between south and southeast
- 14. French commune
- 19. Alike
- 23. A bachelor's apartment
- 24. Foot part between the ball and ankle
- 25. Belonging to a thing
- 26. Japanese classical theater
- 27. Supervises flying
- 28. Not even
- 29. Capital of Saudi Arabia
- 34. Electronic countermeasure
- 35. Consumed
- 36. American politician (abbr.)
- 37. Sun up in New York
- 39. Casually looked through
- 40. Revealed the presence of
- 41. Peyton's little brother
- 42. Diana \_\_, singer
- 44. Study of moral values and rules
- 45. Civil Rights group
- 46. Makes less severe
- 47. Made an emotional appeal
- 48. Vivacity of style
- 51. One who is highly skilled
- 52. Gets around in pursuit of pleasure
- 53. Famed guitarist Clapton
- 54. Most common Japanese surname
- 58. Recipe abbreviation

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P	O	C	S			S	D	D			S	P	O								
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# Mrakas to seek second term as Mayor

From page 1

the 2018-2022 Council term has wound down for the summer, it's time to focus on the future.

"It has been my honour to serve you

as mayor this term," he said. "I have spent the past four years working to do what you elected me to do: work hard for the residents and businesses of our Town. My focus has always been the job

at hand; the day-to-day work that needs to get done to keep our community moving forward in a positive direction.

"The past four years have been filled with wonderful opportunities and extraordinary challenges – and this Council has much to be proud of. We have seen once-in-a-generation initiatives such as moving forward with the Town Square, but we also had to work together to navigate the impact of the pandemic on our lives and businesses and other worthwhile initiatives. Both prove that leadership that gets things done is leadership that works with, and for, our community."

Work ahead, he said, requires leadership "that is focused on community first," and Mrakas said he was "proud" of his record of "working collaboratively with Council and residents to build our community together."

"From strategic developments to bringing day businesses to the core, furthering the revitalization of our downtown to support for local businesses that are the lifeblood of our community; from fostering the further growth of arts and culture initiatives to the protection of our built and natural heritage; my vision remains firmly on community building - maintaining our small-town charm while continuing to provide the amenities our residents expect.

"Over the next two months, as our attention moves to the municipal election and next term of Council, if

I am honoured to once again be your mayor, I look forward to continuing to work together with Council and residents to get things done for our Town – not only for the present, but for our future."

As of Monday, August 8, the 2022 Municipal Ballot has started to take shape with more residents putting themselves forward to represent their selected wards – with more expected in the weeks ahead.

As of press time, in addition to Aurora's two mayoral candidates, incumbent Sandra Humfries has registered for re-election in Ward 1, and incumbent Rachel Gilliland and Daniel Lajeunesse are seeking election in Ward 2. Ward 3 is currently a three-way race between Alexandra Bonham, incumbent Wendy Gaertner, and Harold MacDonald. Incumbent Michael Thompson has put himself forward for re-election in Ward 4, newcomer Iwona Czarnecka in Ward 5, while incumbent Harold Kim is seeking re-election in Ward 6.

Those seeking election as the York Region District School Board trustee for Aurora and Stouffville are Luther C. Brown, Bridget Kilgallon, Asim Sayed, Mary Sled-Lucas, Elizabeth Terrell and Melanie Wright.

Incumbent Elizabeth Crowe is, thus far, the only candidate who has stepped forward for York Catholic District School Board trustee.

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# THINGS you Ought To Know

## WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 10

Aurora's Concerts in the Park Summer Series presents Soul Up Top. This seven-piece ensemble has a fabulous horn and rhythm section that performs R&B Soul classics from the past to the present. Enjoy music from Stevie Wonder, Marvin Gaye, Otis Redding and many others. Concerts take place at Town Park each Wednesday beginning at 7 p.m. Concerts are free to attend with no pre-registration required. Donations to the Aurora Food Pantry are encouraged. For more, visit [aurora.ca/summerconcerts](http://aurora.ca/summerconcerts).

## SATURDAY, AUGUST 13

The Aurora Farmers' Market returns for its 20th this year. Open at Town Park from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. each Saturday through Hallowe'en, the Market will offer an array of farmers, food vendors and artisans. For more information, visit [theaurorafarmersmarket.ca](http://theaurorafarmersmarket.ca).

## WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 17

Aurora's Concerts in the Park Summer Series presents Desire: Tribute to U2. Desire brings to the stage a unique combination of showmanship and style that is rooted in a magnificent grasp of the musical intricacies behind U2. Desire is the total package. Concerts take place at Town Park each Wednesday beginning at 7 p.m. Concerts are free to attend with no pre-registration required. Donations to the Aurora Food Pantry are encouraged. For more, visit [aurora.ca/summerconcerts](http://aurora.ca/summerconcerts).

## THURSDAY, AUGUST 18

Aurora's Movies in the Park summer series

opens at Town Park tonight with the classic "Dennis the Menace." Arrive early to make a comic strip of your own starting at 8 p.m. Showtime is 9 p.m. For more information, visit [aurora.ca/moviesinthepark](http://aurora.ca/moviesinthepark).

## SATURDAY, AUGUST 20

The Aurora Farmers' Market returns for its 20th this year. Open at Town Park from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. each Saturday through Hallowe'en, the Market will offer an array of farmers, food vendors and artisans. For more information, visit [theaurorafarmersmarket.ca](http://theaurorafarmersmarket.ca).

## THURSDAY, AUGUST 25

Aurora's Movies in the Park summer series continues tonight with Disney's "Encanto." Race your way down to the final movie of the season. Arrive at 7.30 p.m. to see if you can match Sonic's speed as you navigate your way through obstacles. Showtime is 8.30 p.m.

## THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1

Aurora's Movies in the Park summer series continues tonight with "Sonic the Hedgehog 2." Family is the centre of this story, so be sure to gather your family for a night of fun. Arrive early to explore the world of Colombia through crafts and activities at 8 p.m. Showtime is 8.45 p.m.

## THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

The Aurora Public Library, as part of the One Book One Aurora Program, presents An Evening with Jan Wong at 7 p.m. Jan Wong went to China as a starry-eyed Maoist in 1972 at the height of the Cultural Revolution. Learn about her experiences and how her love affair began to sour as she became aware of the harsh realities of Chinese communism. A talk followed by a Q&A period. Tickets are available beginning August 1. To register, visit [bit.ly/3rFdZHL](http://bit.ly/3rFdZHL).

## CONTINUING JULY 25 - SEPTEMBER 17

The Aurora Cultural Centre presents Backwards and Forwards: Reflections in Porcupine Quills, a solo exhibition by Vanessa Dion Fletcher. Recent quillworks (2020-present), ranging from intimate pieces on paper to large mural installations, at the core is a negotiation between the artist's hands and porcupine quills. Vanessa Dion Fletcher is a Lenape and Potawatomi neurodiverse Artist. Her family is from Eelūnaapëewii Lahkëewiitt (displaced from Lenapehoking) and European settlers.

\*\*\*\*

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\*\*\*\*

Support AbuseHurts' Delivering Hope Full Circle Program textile recycling and donation program. In the current COVID climate, a greater number of people are wanting to donate or get rid of unwanted items, increasing the need for more outlets being available to receive the items. This program will provide a convenient way for people to donate or get rid of used/unwanted clothing, blankets, linens and furniture and will help lessen the amount of items ending up in landfills. Materials that were previously perceived as waste will now be seen as a valuable resource further encouraging redistribution. The items will be recycled in the following ways: To be given to individuals who are survivors of violence and are transitioning from shelters into new homes; To be sold in our store; To be sold to a textile recycler, which makes for an ongoing source of funding for Abuse Hurts enabling them to provide their services to the thousands of people that require them each year. When and Where: Monday and Wednesday, every week, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., with 30-minute time slots - only 1 drop off per time slot. If you do not have an appointment, we cannot accept your donation. The Abuse Hurts Warehouse is located at 1208 Gorham St, Unit 4, Newmarket - rear unloading dock. Visit [AbuseHurts.ca](http://AbuseHurts.ca) to select your drop off time slot.

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## RESALE HOMES COLLECTIONS

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VOLUME 10, ISSUE 8

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# A Collection of Excellence

### What does a client need from their brokerage?

When he set out to start his own boutique brokerage, broker-owner Angelo Ferlisi sought to answer this question with excellence. After working for a large-scale brokerage from the outset of his career, Angelo knew first-hand how easy it is for an agent's unique skill to be lost in the hustle of 100+ employees. Angelo wanted a smaller experience, where a group of realtors could support each other without the rigid structure of a real estate team, while simultaneously being able to develop and uplift their own personal brands. And so, The Collection was born.

The Collection is a group of affiliate agents, all offering their individual expertise within the field to create a brokerage that can support any and all clients. It was important to Angelo to build a group that lives where they work, and he has succeeded in forming a conglomerate of small business owners who are experts in their areas. This expertise is critical in the current market and has been proven to protect and promote the best interests of the brokerage's clientele.

As we enter late 2022, the real estate market seems impossible to follow, and the thought of buying or selling can send clients spiralling. It seems like by the time they have a grip on the market and have planned their next move, things have already changed. These anxieties are a difficult reality, especially during a time of

**...every client that The Collection represents is given the highest level of care and service, resulting in successful transactions even, during economically difficult times...**

economic recovery, and it can make them feel stagnant and left without any options. These difficult times are when The Collection shines brightest. By engaging with the most skilled third-party services in the industry and leveraging the connections and professional circles of each agent, every client that The Collection represents is given the highest level of care and service, resulting

in successful transactions, even during economically difficult times.

It's clear that The Collection is a world apart from both the mega-brokerages and the smaller teams we see throughout the industry. By allowing each agent to market themselves in their own unique way and encouraging a collaborative space for each agent to grow, The Collection has succeeded in creating a space for the elevation of both their clients and their agents. With Angelo at the helm, it's clear that The Collection will continue to reshape real estate in Southern Ontario, setting the bar for other boutique brokerages and asking itself "How can we be even better tomorrow?"

- Submitted by Angelo Ferlisi, Broker, Forest Hill Collection, Brokerage  
www.ferlisirealestate.ca

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MARKET UPDATE - JULY 2022

AURORA	KING
AVERAGE SALES PRICE	AVERAGE SALES PRICE
\$1,371,558	\$1,664,046
AVERAGE 21 DAYS ON MARKET	AVERAGE 22 DAYS ON MARKET
NUMBER OF SALES	NUMBER OF SALES
62	20
130 NEW LISTINGS	70 NEW LISTINGS
SALE TO LIST RATIO	SALE TO LIST RATIO
96%	96%
YEAR OVER YEAR % CHANGE	YEAR OVER YEAR % CHANGE
16.60%	11.44%

\*The statistics provided were obtained from the Toronto Regional Real Estate Board's Market Watch JULY 2022. Summary of Existing Home Transactions for All Home Types JULY 2022 + Focus on the MLS Home Price Index for Composite for York Region's Aurora and King.

The current market is still experiencing low inventory and while interest rates are higher - the end result for buyers is their mortgage payments will remain the same with the purchase prices being lower. There will be a slight difference in how much interest you are paying versus how much principal on your monthly mortgage payment. This is a market that is not a crash but rather a correction. We believe it is still a very good time to sell and purchase real estate.

- Provided by Key Advantage Team Royal LePage RCR Realty  
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**RESALE HOMES COLLECTIONS**

# 5 costly mistakes to avoid when selling your home

We understand making plans to sell your home can be an overwhelming process.

From completing cosmetic fixes and renovations to completing the listing process and setting aside closing and moving costs, it can be a lot to prepare for a first-timer. That is why we want to share some advice so you can save money and undergo the selling process more smoothly. With twenty-plus years of collective real estate experience in the King and surrounding regions, The Michele Denniston Real Estate Group will use our expertise to illustrate the top costly mistakes you can avoid when selling!

**NOT CONSIDER PROFESSIONAL STAGING SERVICES**

It makes sense for every seller to take time before listing your home to optimize the look and feel of your space. However, after the decluttering process, it is always valuable to work with a team who offers complimentary professional staging or hire one yourself! Stagers have a trained eye to make spaces bigger, more functional and look more appealing to buyers. By adding in greenery, incorporating specific colours, textures and materials and moving furniture around, your home will appeal to more buyers and look better in the photo and video content.

**PINCH PENNIES FOR PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOGRAPHY**

Photography and videography content has never been more critical when listing your home. Since the onset of COVID, online lookbooks, MLS photos and

marketing listings on social media channels have drastically increased clicks. We advise our clients to choose high-quality creative teams and not skimp on cheaper options for their video and photos! Although some may overlook the value of high-quality, professionally taken photos and video, our team agrees that these elements have helped our clients save money and time in the long run. Don't use iPhone cameras or inexperienced photographers when it comes to one of the most significant transactions of your life! It is imperative that you properly invest in photo and video content so you can successfully market and showcase your home to buyers!

**SETTING AN UNREALISTIC PRICE**

It is safe to say the market is forever changing. Some clients may be able to wait until there is a more favourable market to list their home, although others may have more restrictions and pressure to sell their homes. Considering this, it is essential to have realistic expectations regarding your home's pricing. If you work with a realtor who has experience in your neighbourhood and with your type of home, they can recommend an accurate price and offer comparisons on why that specific price makes sense. Pricing too high often leads to homes sitting on the market for extended periods, ultimately lowering the buyer interest and long-term revenue you will make.

**GETTING TOO EMOTIONALLY INVOLVED**

You have spent considerable time in your residence, where you have collected memories and attachments to the space, no matter how long you have lived there.

We understand coming to terms with selling to a new owner can be an emotionally triggering experience at times. Having strong emotional attachments isn't bad, but allowing your feelings to affect the pricing, negotiating, and closing process can be costly. We recommend hiring a real estate group you can connect with and trust to ensure the overall selling process is the easiest and smoothest it can go!

**NOT HIRING A REAL ESTATE SALESPERSON OR BROKER**

Many sellers want to forego commission costs and decide to list and sell their homes themselves. For-Sale-By-Owner home sales statistically stay on the market much longer and often sell far less than what they were listed or what they are worth. The paperwork, the closing procedures, and negotiations may take much longer or not be as successful as if you work with an educated, qualified and licensed professional. Our clients and our team can guarantee that the small commission costs you allocate to your agent will be worth it than going through this substantial transaction on your own!

**OUR ADVICE TO YOU**

By working with an experienced real estate team who knows the ins and outs of selling and what mistakes you can prepare for and avoid when selling your home, you will experience a painless and positive selling experience! If you have any questions about the selling process, what to expect in the shifting market or would like a free home estimate, our dedicated team is pleased to chat with you! Visit us

at 50 Doctor Kay Dr. Unit C-22 in Schomberg or call Michele directly at (416) 433-8316! We are committed to providing you with honest, reputable and top-tier real estate service; we look forward to working with you soon!



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**RESALE HOMES COLLECTIONS**

# Where to add luxury to your home without breaking the bank



returns. Freshening up your front door with a coat of paint and a new knocker or hardware is an easy step to get started. Further, replacing your siding with stone veneer may sound expensive, but it's one of the most cost-effective ways to give your exteriors a grand transformation. Shouldice Designer Stone's Estate Stone is a great choice for designer stone veneer. It comes in 11 luxurious colours to help make a bold style statement and bring unmatched value to your home.

www.newscanada.com

(NC) Many people are still spending more time at home than we ever have before. For luxurious and inviting renovations to upgrade your home in style, here are a few great ideas.

**DELUXE LAUNDRY ROOM**

Make the space tidy and efficient by organizing with open shelving, baskets and hooks. Then add a touch of

extravagance by ditching the fluorescent lighting and opting for a chandelier and recessed lighting instead. And for the walls, neutrals can make the space feel fresh and clean while a bold wallpaper can add some fun.

**LAVISH NOOKS AND CRANNIES**

Forgotten spaces can become conversation starters with the right furnishings and décor. Is there an awkward nook in your hallway? Upcycle a delicate vintage dressing table and add a statement mirror to create a staging area to check your hair and makeup before you head out. Is there a window in a neglected corner of your living room? Add a large potted plant with bright foliage for effortless character or set up a pretty chair and cozy blankets to create a cute reading nook.

**LUXURY BATHROOMS**

Bathroom renovations traditionally have a very high return on investment and are one of the most popular rooms for makeovers. The upscale spa look is a favourite for a reason — it evokes feelings of comfort, wellness and relaxation that are normally a rare treat. To get the look at home, invest in deluxe towels and bathrobes, soft glowing lamps and even a statement bathtub, such as a classic clawfoot. In terms of materials for flooring, walls and backsplashes, concrete, stone, wood, glass and ceramic are all great choices.

**ELEGANT EXTERIORS**

Improving curb appeal can do wonders for the first impression made by your property, while delivering strong



## 3 tips for a more relaxing home

(NC) We all want to feel comfortable in our own home. But sometimes stress and frustration can creep on in — especially after many of us have spent extra time at home over the last couple of years. Here are three simple ways to help you find more peace and relaxation at home.

**1 ADD A SENSE OF NATURE**

Whether full fiddle leaf figs or smaller trailing pothos, the 70s houseplant trend is back in a big way — and for good reason. Many plants offer air-purifying properties that keep your spaces fresh, adding oxygen and bringing a reminder of the natural world outside the walls of your home.

If living plants aren't your thing, try adding natural colours and textures to your home, such as soothing sage green or rattan rugs or baskets.

**2 GET A HANDLE ON CLUTTER**

Unused items hanging around your home, such as random papers or knickknacks to extra clothes or toys — they not only crowd your space, but they also clutter up your mind as well. Take some time to get rid of what you don't want or need. You can sell or donate items in good condition and recycle or toss those that aren't. Make sure items you do keep, like mail, shoes or books have a place to be stored so you're less tempted to leave them hanging around.

**3 SET A CLEAN ROUTINE**

According to a recent survey commissioned by Libman, more than 90 per cent of those surveyed claim to feel more relaxed when they have a clean home. So, whether you're looking forward to a big clean or would rather put it off, remember that it will have a great benefit to your mental health in the end.

For tough tasks like scrubbing bathroom grout and tiles, try out Libman's Small Scrub Brush. It has strong polymer bristles for strength and efficiency as well as an ergonomic handle. Plus, it's dishwasher safe, so you can reuse it often without worrying about spreading old mold or germs.

www.newscanada.com



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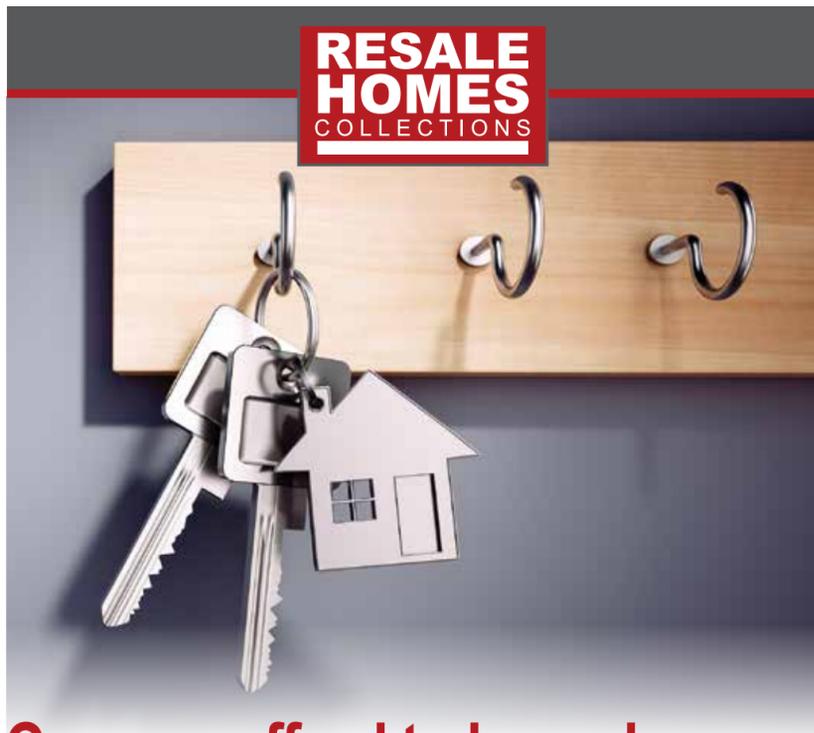
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## Can you afford to buy a home in a hot housing market?

(NC) Owning a home can feel like an important milestone, providing a sense of control and stability over your future. It can also be a point of pride and an investment in your equity. And yet, sky-high housing prices across the country often make it feel impossible to afford a home.

In fact, the amount Canadians expect to pay for a house has increased by \$100,000 over the past year according to a recent survey by BMO. With buyers across the country expecting to pay an average of \$588,000 for their property, it's natural for would-be buyers to question their options. Here are some tips to help you figure out if you can afford to buy.

### CONSIDER WANTS AND NEEDS

Take time to think about the kind of home you want and what you are willing to compromise on. Asking yourself questions can help you figure out what's affordable for you. For example, are you willing to pay more for a prime location, or will you be just fine buying further afield? Do you plan on living in a new

home for decades or only a few years? Be realistic with yourself and understand you may have to make some changes to this list or make sacrifices down the line. But at least you'll know where you draw the line when it comes to affordability.

### CALCULATE BUDGET

Take stock of your financial position and research what your mortgage could look like. Remember that you will have to pass a stress test to qualify for a mortgage so double-check what you can afford based on that qualifying number, not on what you make. There are plenty of online calculators that make it easy to figure this out. And when you know what you're working with, consider getting pre-approved for a mortgage. That way you'll officially know your budget, you'll be ready to act fast when the time comes, and you'll have time for due diligence.

### ASK ANY QUESTIONS

There are many factors that influence what you can afford to pay for a home, from your credit score to the type of mortgage you choose and the size of your down payment. Everyone's situation is unique, so it can help to discuss your options with a mortgage broker or specialist. Do your research ahead of time and be prepared with questions about your options.

Find more information at [bmo.com/mortgage](http://bmo.com/mortgage).

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**RESALE HOMES COLLECTIONS**

# Tips for increasing your home's value

**MONICA STOHR** is a local realtor with more-than 33 years of experience as a top producing realtor in the Top 1-2% of Royal LePage Realtors throughout Canada yearly. Proper home preparation is key. Let her success in this area guide you to a higher value when selling.

**INSPECT IT**

Not every home improvement is cosmetic. Deteriorating roof or eavestroughs, outdated electrical systems — you can't fix it if you don't know it's broken.

Hire an inspector to check out the areas of your home that you don't normally see.

They may discover hidden problems that could negatively impact your home's value.

Small problems (such as a hidden water leak) can become big, expensive problems quickly; the longer you put off repairs, the more expensive those repairs will be.

**PAINT, PAINT, PAINT**

One of the simplest, most cost-effective improvements of all is paint!

Freshly painted rooms look clean and updated — and that spells value.

When selecting paint colours, keep in mind that neutrals appeal to the greatest number of people, therefore making your home more desirable.

**PLANT A TREE OR ADD LOW-MAINTENANCE LANDSCAPING**

If you aren't planning to sell your house today, plan for the future with a landscaping improvement that will mature over time.

No question that shrubs and colourful plants will add curb appeal to any home.

**SAVE THE POPCORN FOR THE MOVIES**

Few structural elements date a house more than popcorn ceilings.

So dedicate a weekend to ditching the dated look and adding dollar signs to the value of your home.

NOTE: some older ceilings could contain asbestos, so before undertaking this project, have yours tested by professionals.

Removing a popcorn ceiling may not seem like a big change but one of the keys to adding value to your home is to repair, replace or remove anything that could turn buyers away.

**CLEAN UP THE LAWN**

Overgrown or patchy lawns and oversized bushes will cause your home to stand out — in a bad way.

The good news is that taming your jungle is an easy fix.

Do it yourself or hire a lawn service company.

Your curb appeal will go from messy to maintained without blowing your budget.

**CLEANLINESS COUNTS**

The old adage that you only get one shot at a first impression is true.

So, make the interior of your home shine from the moment someone walks through the door.

Hire a cleaning service for a thorough top-to-bottom scrubbing.

Even if you clean your home regularly, there are nooks and crannies that you may miss or overlook.

Let a cleaning service do the dirty work to really make your home sparkle.

**VISUALLY INCREASE YOUR HOME'S SQUARE FOOTAGE**

The size of your home dramatically affects the value, but square footage isn't the only space that counts.

Visual space or how large a home feels also counts.

Remove heavy dark draperies - a sunny room feels larger and more open.

Try adding a single large mirror to a room to visually double the space.

Finally, clear the clutter.

**SMALL BATHROOM & KITCHEN UPDATES EQUAL A BIG RETURN**

Kitchen & Bathroom updates are always a smart move.

Even if you can't afford a full remodel, small changes such as new lighting, quartz counter with under mount sink, new plumbing fixtures, painting the cabinetry and adding new hardware can update the room without denting your wallet.



**REPLACE STAINED CARPETS/ SCRATCHED HARDWOOD**

Are your carpets stained and worn? Hardwood scratched and showing too much wear and tear? Nothing turns buyers off more than the thought that they will immediately need to replace all of the floorings in a home. Try inexpensive laminate or replace carpet for a fresh updated look that will make a large impact on Buyers.

**KEEP UP WITH REGULAR MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS**

Walk around your home and make a list of all the little things that are broken or in need of repair. Individually, small repairs might not seem important, but if every room has just one thing wrong, those can add up to create the impression that your home has been neglected. If you can't tackle the repairs properly yourself, hire a handyman for a day and watch your "to do" list disappear. Staying on top of maintenance today eliminates problems down the road should you decide to sell.

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Loaded with Upgrades!

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Ground Floor 2 Bedrooms, 2 Baths, Built-In Garage with Interior Access.

**SOLD**

**TOWNHOUSE ON PREMIUM LOT**  
Beautiful freehold 1600 square foot townhouse on premium 116 ft deep sunny Southwest facing lot. Updated white kitchen with Calacutta gold quartz counters & matching slab backsplash, bright eat in kitchen with California shutters, spacious living & dining rooms with stained wood flooring plus additional family room with fireplace on in between level, hardwood staircase with runner & upgr. pickets, new designer powder room, new 12x24 porcelain tile, large primary suite with walk in closet and 4 pc ensuite plus 2 additional generous bedrooms and finished basement. Call Monica Stohr to view this exclusive opportunity. Offered at **\$1,199,000**

**STUNNING CUSTOM BUILT BEAUTY**  
4 year new custom built stunner offering 3300 square feet plus prof. fin basement! 10 ft smooth ceilings on main w/ 9 ft on 2nd level & bsmt. Exceptional quality craftsmanship thruout boasting wide plank engineered hardwood main & 2nd, 8 ft doors, extensive millwork incl decorative ceiling & panel wall mouldings, oversized plaster crown moulding, chef's kitchen with 9 ft quartz island, spa ensuite & massive walk in closet, all large bdms with ensuite baths. Incredible backyard oasis complete with outdoor kitchen & bar with built in pizza oven & bbq, fridge, entertainers patio w/ hot tub & pergola sprinkler system, perennial grdns! Far too many features to list! Call Monica for details. **\$2,488,000**

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**RESALE  
HOMES  
COLLECTIONS**



# Ask The Big Tuna



By Julien Laurion  
The Big Tuna of Real Estate

Dear Julien, I may have to relocate for my work, and if I do, I cannot afford to keep my property here in Aurora and another in the new city.

This makes me kind of nervous because if I have to list my property, it will not be in one of the 'hot' markets, in fact, they say this is the big 'correction' in the market.

Could you provide some insight?

Thank you in advance, Cookie Monster.

Cookie Monster, are congratulations in order?  
I hope that this potential relocation is something you are looking forward to!  
Yes, that is true, while listing your home in January, February, or March may not be the 'hot' time to buy and sell in cold climates, such as Aurora, I would not be discouraged.  
Historically and logically, sellers prefer to list their homes during the peak market time, for example, the spring and fall months.  
However, the market right now is quite different than in the past.  
The demand for affordable homes is HIGH!

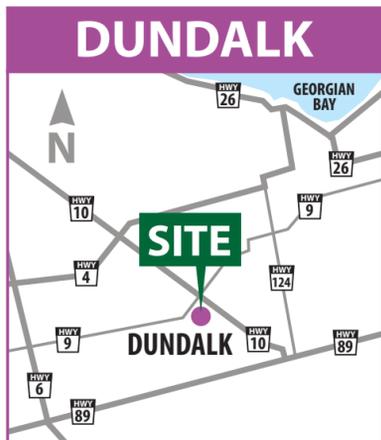
Additionally, the rise in interest rates has also removed a lot of investor buyers from the market.  
In turn, for those who are prepared and can afford the new interest rates, there is a lot of quality home out there, and a lot of sellers are willing to negotiate.  
However, due to the lack of qualified buyers, supply is dwindling all around the GTA.  
Compared to 2020 the number of properties that were listed at this time is down by 18%.  
It was a seller's market last year where supply didn't meet demand, and we are now seeing a trend towards a buyer's market once again.  
Properties that are priced right, well maintained and located in good neighbourhoods are selling at a strong price regardless of when the home is listed.  
This should be encouraging to you!  
While life does not always line up perfectly to market trends, if you have to list in the calmer time of the year, or even an odd year, given the current trends, with good marketing and a great Realtor, you will get top dollar for your home.  
If you need to sell, give me a call and we can discuss all the options. You will have a lot of things you will need to worry about with relocating, and you should work with a Realtor who can take the stress out of selling your home. Let me do that heavy lifting! Good luck.

Julien Laurion AKA Big Tuna is a local Real Estate Sale Representative with Royal LePage Your Community Realty in Aurora. I am a real estate agent who has expertise in both Real Estate and Renovations and has been involved in this community for over 20 years. If you have a question for my monthly article or if you are considering buying, selling or leasing a home please feel free to call or email me directly at (416) 402-5530 or julien@bigtuna.ca or by alternatively visiting my website [www.bigtunarealty.com](http://www.bigtunarealty.com) or Facebook page @bigtunarealty



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**20 MARY AGAR COURT, NOBLETON**

**\$2,749,000**

**FEATURED LISTING**

4 bedrooms, 3.5 bathrooms  
 Upgrades! Features! Spectacular finishes! This home will blow you away with its custom millwork trim and mouldings, chef's kitchen with Miele appliances, designer lighting, and best of all, your dream backyard!



**8 MACMURCHY AVE. NOBLETON**

**\$3,099,000**

**EXCLUSIVE LISTING**

5 bedrooms, 6 bathrooms  
 This spectacular home is nestled in the sought-after Gates of Nobleton on a rare ravine lot! It's fully upgraded with 10' ceilings, wide plank hardwood, and custom millwork throughout.



**21 MCCUTCHEON AVE. NOBLETON**

**\$2,399,000**

**NEW PRICE**

This stunning 4+1 bed, 2.5 bath property in the Sheardown neighbourhood in Nobleton is situated on a 1/2 acre lot that is waiting to be transformed into your dream oasis!



**124 RIDGEBANK CT. BOLTON**

**\$1,249,000**

**FOR SALE**

3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms  
 This beautifully upgraded home in Bolton features a stunning lot that backs onto the Greenbelt! It also features a newly remodelled kitchen and a walkout to the deep, heavily-treed lot.



**33 TOTTEN TRAIL, TOTTENHAM**

**\$799,000**

**JUST LISTED**

2 bedrooms, 2.5 bathrooms  
 This brand-new townhome is the perfect place to make your own! Featuring upgraded floors and spacious balconies, this newly built space is the perfect investment or family home! Co-Represented with Mike Djogovic



**113 STONELEIGH DRIVE, THE BLUE MOUNTAINS**

**JUST LISTED**

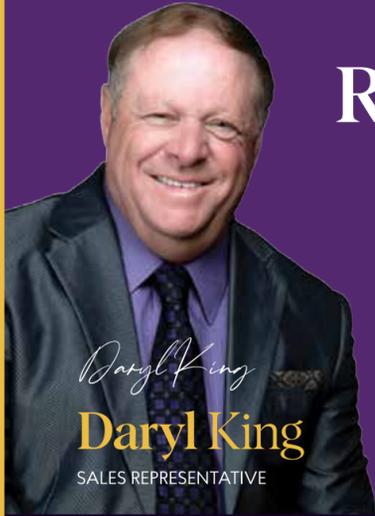
3+2 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms  
 Luxury living in Blue Mountain! This brand new home is just minutes from the slopes, the Blue Mountain Village, downtown Collingwood and beautiful hiking trails. Absolutely stunning with upgrades throughout and soaring ceilings, this is vacationing in style!



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# Real Estate Market Has Shifted

## How Does That Affect YOU?

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Only 2 Available. Spectacular Designs. Large Lots. Choose Your Finishes. Private Cul-De-Sac Location in Prestigious Aurora. Asking \$4.888M & \$4.988M.



### DESIRABLE SOUTH RICHVALE

85' Frontage. Gorgeous Executive Home with Finished Lower Level. Professionally Landscaped Lot. Close to Yonge St., Hwy 7 & 404. Offered at \$3.998M.



### 25+ ACRES ESTATE IN KING

Custom Built & Renovated Home with 3 Car Garage, Scenic Land with Barn. Backing onto Centennial Park & Trails. Presented at \$4.898M.



### COUNTRY ESTATE IN TOWN

Build Your Dream Home On 3.2 Acre Of Picturesque Privacy in Aurora. Exceptional Views Overlooking Mackenzie Pond. Close to Yonge St & Amenities. Offered at \$2.198M.



### 10+ ACRES IN BEAUTIFUL KING

Newly Renovated 5 Bedroom Home With Separate Main Floor In-law Suite. Inground Pool and Large Shop with Power. Asking \$3.998M.



### EXCELLENT LOCATION

Spacious Freehold Townhome with Finished Lower Level in South Richmond Hill. Fenced Backyard. Walk to Yonge St, Hillcrest Mall, Restaurants, etc. Presented at \$1.018M.



### NEW CUSTOM BUILD - LAKE WILCOX

Stunning "Never Lived In" Dream Home Backing onto Ravine in High Demand Lake Wilcox Community of Richmond Hill. Asking \$3.088M.



### PRIME COMMERCIAL LOCATION

Excellent Exposure Close to Hwy's 404 & 7. MC-1 Zoning Allows for Several Permitted Uses. Renovated End Unit. Generous Parking Facility. Presented at \$1.1M.



### BUILDER'S MODEL HOME

Nobleton's Most Sought-After Neighbourhood. Executive Residence with Magnificent Details & 3-Car Garage (Can Accommodate Lift) Set on 3/4 Acre Lot. Offered at \$2.448M.



### BUNGALOW - 2 ACRES

Fantastic Country Living in a Fast Growing Community of East Gwillimbury. Just Minutes to Hwy 404, Proposed Hwy 400 Bypass & All Amenities. Presented at \$1.348M.



### 10 ACRES - SEPARATE SHOP

Attention to Detail. Recently Renovated Estate Home with Attached 2.5 Car Garage (9ft Ceiling) & Separate Shop With Loft. Quiet & Private Road in King. Offered at \$3.999M.



### INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY

Approximately 10 Acres with 650ft Frontage in Rapid Growing Community. Excellent Income Property. Zoning Permits Many Uses. Close to Hwy 404, Proposed Hwy 400 Bypass & Amenities. Asking \$2.3M.



### PICTURESQUE 26+ ACRE FARM

Tastefully Renovated Bungalow. Finished Lower Level In-Law Suite. Separate Garage/Shop With Upper Loft Living Quarters. 2 Stocked Ponds. Desirable Uxbridge Location. Asking \$2.538M.



### 50' WATERFRONT

Breathtaking Views! Just 10 Mins to Go Train, 40 Mins to Downtown Toronto. No Need for Cottage. Updated Home. Large Private Lot. Dock Your Toys at Home. Offered at \$1.888M.



### CONDO WITH STUNNING VIEWS

Almost 1,900sf. 2 Bedroom + Solarium/Den & Open Balcony. Layout Ideal For Entertaining Family & Friends. Prime Yonge & Clark Location in Vaughan. Presented at \$1.2M.

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\*As per REMAX stats for Large Residential Teams, March 2022. Not intended to solicit clients currently under contract with another Brokerage.